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Editor's Comments

The ANA's World's Fair of Money annual show is just around the corner. I'm sure anticipation is growing for those of us who are attending the show. There will be a number of meetings and presentations that directly relate to bust coinage at the show. The first will be our annual meeting Wednesday morning the 10th at 8AM in the Huntington BC room. All rooms mentioned are at the host hotel, the Hilton Anaheim. We will be conducting the business of the organization including the annual election, awarding the Jules Reiver Literary Award, and announcing the HOF inductee. We look forward to seeing many of you there. The bourse will open just after the conclusion of our meeting at 10AM.

The Bust Quarter Collectors Society meeting will follow later that afternoon at 2PM in the Catalina 5 room of the hotel. Glenn Peterson will be hosting the meeting of our quarter aficionados.

On Thursday the 11th the Bust Half Nut Club will host its board meeting for members only at 8AM in the Huntington A room. The general meeting for everyone will follow later that afternoon at 2PM in the Catalina 5 room.

On Friday the 12th at 10AM David Finkelstein will give a "Money Talks" presentation in the Avila room titled; "The 1794 Congressional Committee Appointed to Examine the Mint". I'm sure David will have some very interesting facts to present to us about the early mint.

Finally, on Saturday the 13th at 3PM, I will be giving a "Money Talks" presentation; "Connections; Black Pepper, The Mountain That Eats Men, and John Reich" in the Avila room. I hope those that are still at the convention will join me for an animated trip through history.

Remember to submit your quarter census to Glenn for inclusion in the next issue of the journal. His contact information is at the bottom of this page.

Hope to see you soon at the convention!

NOTICE

The Bust Quarter Census information is now being solicited for inclusion in the next Issue of the John Reich Journal. Please email your complete inventory listing (including ALL duplicates and die states) of your Bust Quarter Collection to:

Dr. Glen Peterson at gpeters@tds.net

Please Respond promptly to ensure inclusion of your collection in this Census.



A Numismatic Marriage

By Garrett S. Ziss

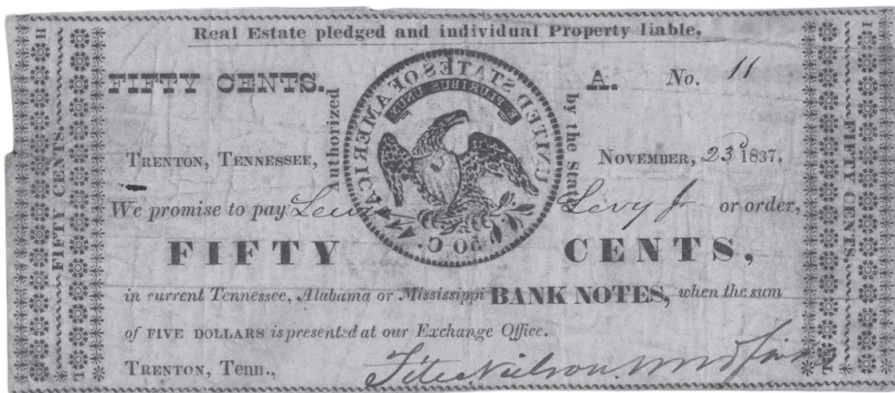


Figure 1
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

This article is a condensed version of the program presented at the John Reich Collectors Society Meeting on Aug 12, 2015 in Chicago, Illinois.

As JRCS members, we often talk about die marriages and remarriages, but this article discusses numismatic marriages. In Volume 5 / Issue 1 of the John Reich Journal, David Davis wrote an interesting article entitled “Frontier Ingenuity and Coincidences”. In the article, he described a piece of paper money that he owned that had a “mirror image impression” of an 1832 O-103 Capped Bust half dollar reverse on it. Shown above (Fig.1) is the note he wrote about. It’s a 50 cent note from the Exchange Office in Trenton, TN and is dated November 23, 1837. I collect both Bust coins and U.S. currency and thought that studying Bust coin images on American paper money would be a great way to combine my two interests. I decided to continue the research that David Davis wrote about 25 years ago in his JRJ article.

The Hard Times period (1837-1843) was when the majority of Bust coins were pictured on paper money, so my research is focused on this time period. Because of various economic problems in the United States at that time, specie was in short supply. This led to the hoarding of hard money in circulation, so paper money and tokens were used as a substitute. During the Hard Times period, federal paper money was not issued, so the paper money that was issued consisted mostly of state-chartered bank notes and scrip. The International Encyclopedia Dictionary of Numismatics defines scrip as “paper notes issued by companies or private individuals as a temporary replacement for legitimate money.” Scrip can also be described as a note with a face value of less than \$1. Today, these state bank notes and scrip are called obsolete paper money because they were not issued by the federal government and they are not currently in circulation.

The Bust coin images on obsolete paper money include all denominations of Bust coinage. Today, some of these notes are quite rare, which is why they are often seen in lower grades. Usually (but not always), the Bust coin pictured on the note is the same denomination as the note. The most prevalent Bust coin denomination pictured on obsolete paper money is the dollar (approx. 45%), followed by the quarter and half dollar (approx. 20% each), then the dime and half dime (approx. 5% each).

Roughly 60% of the notes with Bust coin images on them were produced by the large bank note engraving company, Rawdon, Wright & Hatch. They printed paper money with four different Bust coin images. The first image is a Reduced Diameter Capped Bust quarter reverse, shown on a 25 cent note from the Mechanics Hall Association of Newark, NJ. (Fig.2). The second image is an 1837 Reeded Edge half dollar obverse, shown on a 50 cent note from the Bank of the State of Alabama at Tuscaloosa (Fig. 3).

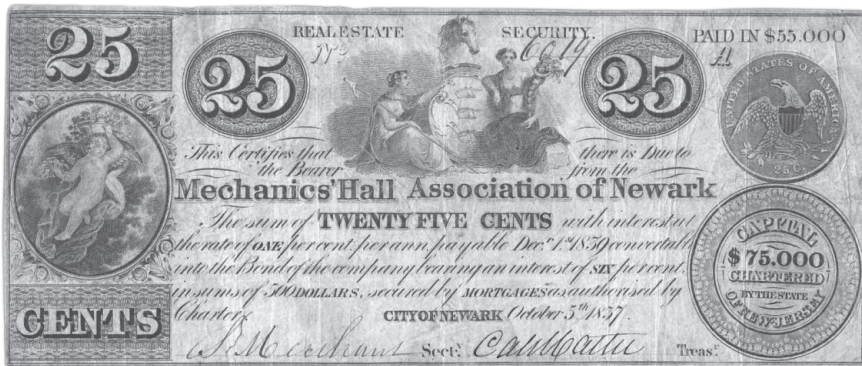


Figure 2
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

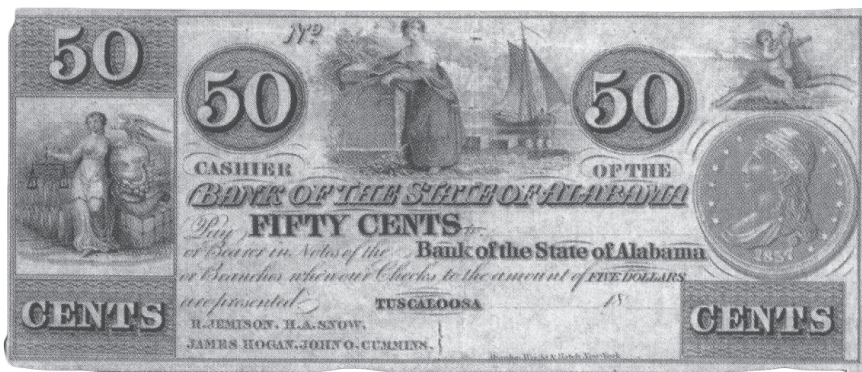


Figure 3
Image Courtesy of Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

The third image they used is a Heraldic Eagle Draped Bust dollar reverse, shown on a \$1 note from the Grand River Bank of Grand Rapids, Michigan (Fig. 4). The fourth image is a panel of ten 1799-1800 Draped Bust dollars, shown on a \$10 note from The Bank of West Florida at Appalachicola (Fig. 5).



Figure 4
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions



Figure 5
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

It isn't surprising that Bust coins were pictured on paper money during the Hard Times period, because the bank or company that issued them was sending a message of financial strength to the citizens. The Bust coin images also showed that the note could be exchanged for a specific amount of money. Unfortunately, this exchange was not always possible. Sometimes the notes were counterfeit or the bank or company that issued them did not have enough capital to back the notes, which made them worthless.

During the Hard Times period, there were 26 states in the United States. So far in my research, I've found that 14 of these states issued paper money with Bust coin images on them. The states are: Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Vermont.

I've also documented 81 different examples of Bust coin images on paper money, 66 of which were issued during the Hard Times period. I decided to enter this data onto an Excel spreadsheet so I could sort or search for a specific parameter and then analyze it. When I sorted the data by state, two states jumped out at me for being quite different. The two states are Michigan and Maryland.

Michigan was the 26th state to join the Union on January 26, 1837. At that time, Michigan had just 9 banks, but only a year later, the number of banks in the state had exploded to 40. The explosion in the number of banks was the result of the Free Banking Law that was passed in Michigan in 1837. This law made it much easier to get a state bank charter. It stated that 12 or more landowners in one area could start a bank as long as they had enough capital. Unfortunately, many of these banks didn't actually have enough capital to back the notes they issued, so their notes were worthless.

According to the information I've collected so far, 9 of the 40 Michigan banks issued notes with Bust coin images on them. Just one engraving company, Rawdon, Wright & Hatch, produced 100% of these Michigan bank notes, which is unusual. They took advantage of the opportunity to quickly get a lot of business in this new state. Furthermore, the only Bust coin pictured on the Michigan bank notes is the Draped Bust dollar reverse (with the typical bank note denominations of \$1, \$2, or \$3). Figure 6 shows an example of a Michigan bank note. It is a \$2 note from the Saginaw City Bank of Saginaw, MI and has the image of two Heraldic Eagle Draped Bust dollar reverses.

The Michigan bank notes with Bust coin images on them definitely show conformity with the engraving company that made them and with the type of Bust coin pictured on the note. (Please note: A Bust quarter and a Bust half dollar are each pictured on a Michigan note, but these images are on scrip notes, not bank notes.)

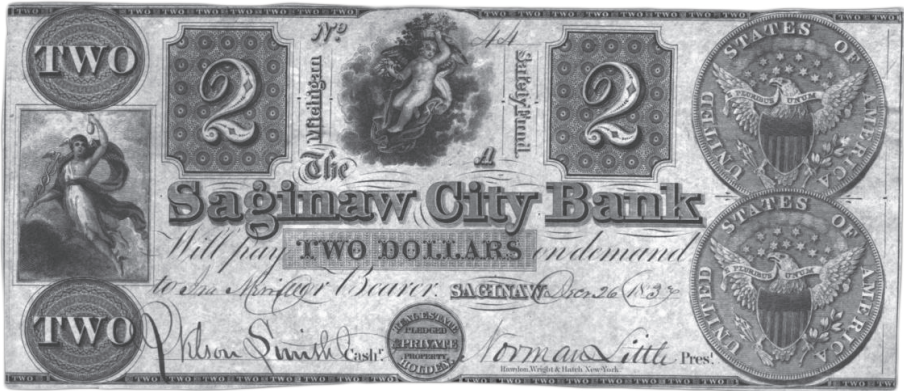


Figure 6
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

On the other hand, the paper money with Bust coin images that was issued in Maryland shows diversity. Maryland did not pass a Free-Banking Law, so the number of banks did not rapidly increase. The government and businesses stepped in to provide paper money for use in circulation. Instead of just one large engraving company, a few small printing companies made many of the Maryland notes with Bust coin images.

These small printing companies did not typically print paper money but specialized in other areas. For example, the Herald Office, who printed scrip for use in Frederick and Sykesville, MD, was actually a newspaper office. Murphy and Toy, two other businesses who printed paper money for use in Frederick and Lonaconing, MD, mainly printed books. Finally, Horton, who printed scrip for the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, specialized in engraving wood and copper plates for children's books.

The type of Bust coins pictured on the Maryland notes is also much more diverse than in Michigan. Maryland issued paper money with images of 4 denominations of Bust coinage: a half dime, dime, quarter, and a half dollar. Maryland is the only state I've seen so far that issued paper money with the image of a Bust half dime on it.

With magnification, I carefully compared the Bust half dime, dime, and quarter images on the paper money produced by the four small Maryland printers. I discovered that the images of each denomination are the same, so it's likely that they shared coin images with each other. As an example, the half dime images that were compared are shown below on two notes. Figure 7 shows a 5 cent scrip note from an unidentified issuer in Frederick, MD, and was printed by Murphy. Figure 8 shows a 5 cent scrip note from the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, MD, and was printed by Horton.

The Capped Bust half dime reverse images on these two notes are the same. It would certainly make sense if these small Maryland printers shared coin images since they didn't specialize in printing paper money. Sharing coin images would save them money and time. (Please note: The sizes of the half dimes in Figs. 7 and 8 are different because the notes were resized to fit this article. Also, there was no need to compare the two half dollar images because one image was a half dollar obverse and the other was a half dollar reverse.)

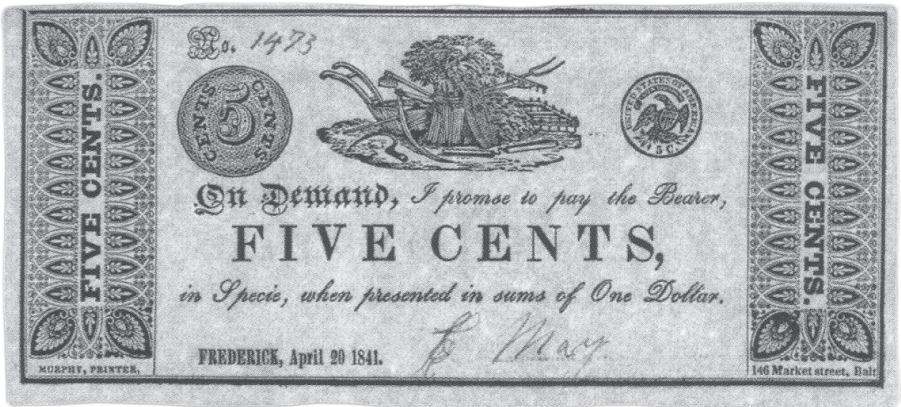


Figure 7

Image Courtesy of the Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

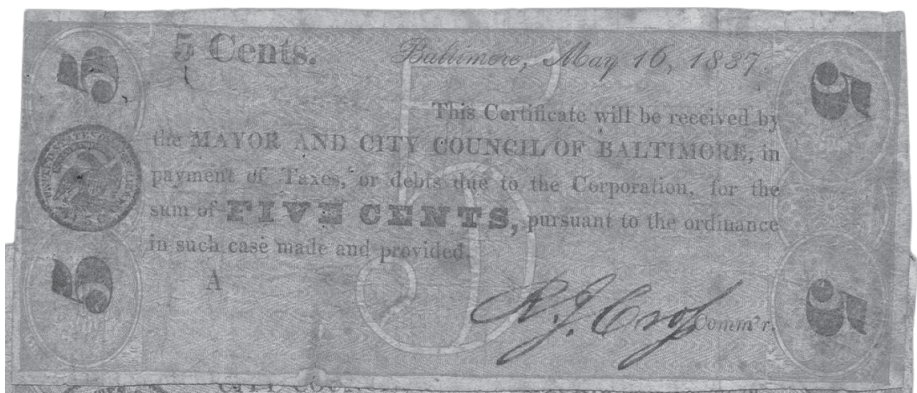


Figure 8

Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

In summary, this research project shows that the paper money with Bust coin images that was issued in Michigan during the Hard Times period is different than the notes that were issued in Maryland. Differences are seen in the type of note (bank note or scrip), the engraving/printing companies that made them, and the type of Bust coin pictured on the note. The fact that Michigan passed the Free-Banking Law but Maryland did not appears to have influenced these three areas.

Despite their differences, there is one thing that the obsolete paper money issued in Michigan and Maryland does have in common: none of the notes they issued show images of genuine Bust coins. There are many differences between genuine Bust coins and the coin images pictured on Michigan and Maryland obsolete paper money. A few of these differences are highlighted below.

First, let's look at the Michigan bank notes produced by Rawdon, Wright & Hatch. On the image (Fig 9, right), the Heraldic Eagle Draped Bust dollar reverse has all 13 stars in two lines above the eagle's head. However, on genuine dollars, there are 11 stars in two lines above the eagle's head, plus a star in front of and behind the eagle's head. Also, the tail feathers are stubby in the image and there are not enough arrows in the left claw as compared to genuine dollars.



Figure 9

Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

Next, let's look at an example from the Maryland scrip notes produced by the small Maryland printers. On the Reeded Edge half dollar reverse image (Fig 10, right), our country's name is misspelled, and reads "UNITED SATES OF AMERICA." Also, the legend lettering does not extend close enough to the arrowheads in the image and the top pair of leaves are bent differently than on genuine half dollars. Comparisons of the Capped Bust quarter, dime and half dime reverse images to their genuine Bust coin counterparts also showed many differences.



Figure 10
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

In the last section of this article, we will venture out of the Hard Times period to look at some very interesting notes with Bust coin images. Figures 11 and 12 contain two of the earliest examples of Bust coin images on obsolete paper money. Figure 11 is a \$5 contemporary counterfeit note from the Bank of Albany in Albany, NY, and is dated February 22, 1813. It shows 5 Draped Bust dollars, and the only legible coin date is 1801. Figure 12 is a genuine \$20 note, also from the Bank of Albany. It shows a stack of 20 Draped Bust dollars, and the only legible coin date is 1803. Even though they aren't the same denomination, you can see that the quality of the engraving on the genuine note is much better than the quality on the counterfeit note.

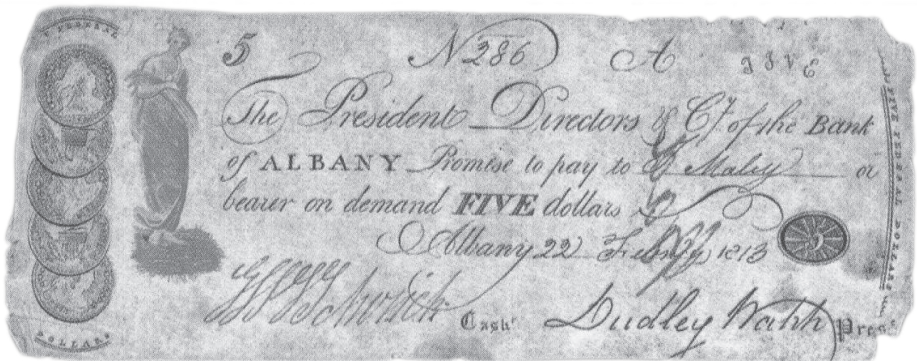


Figure 7
Image Courtesy of the Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

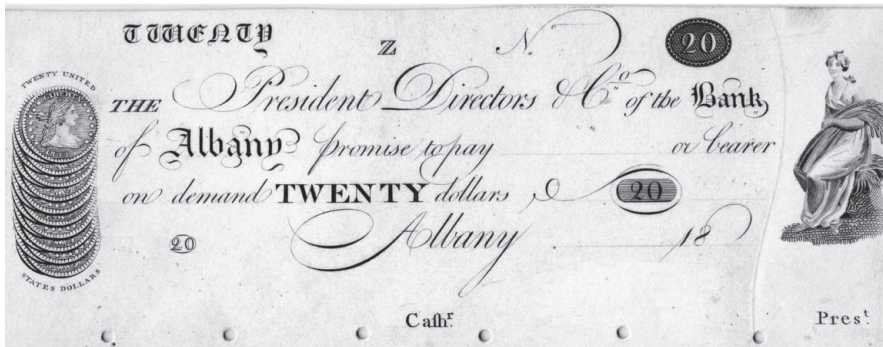


Figure 12
Image Courtesy of W. David Perkins

Figure 13 is a genuine \$2 note from the Bank of Albany and shows 2 Draped Bust dollars. Figure 14 is a 25 cent scrip note from the Exchange Company at Carthage, Mississippi and shows 10 Capped Bust dimes. It's unusual that the denomination of this note is not the same as the face value of the coins pictured on the note. At first, these two notes don't look like they have anything in common. However, if you look more closely, you'll notice an obvious similarity: the date on the Draped Bust dollar is 1805 and the dates on the Capped Bust dimes are 1817 and 1818. So, what these notes have in common is that their engravers were not coin experts!

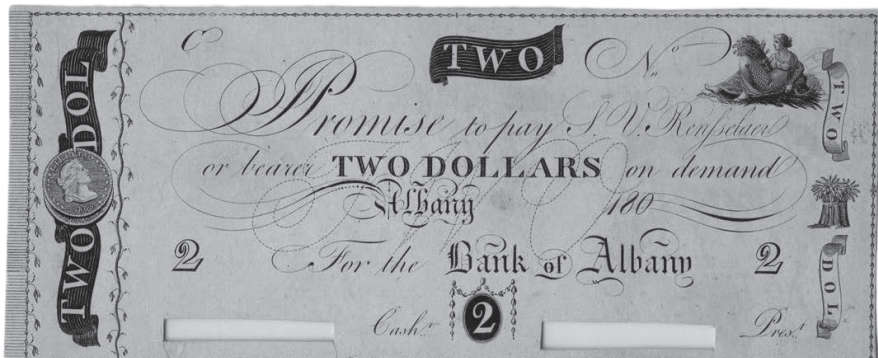


Figure 13
Image Courtesy of W. David Perkins



Figure 14
Image Courtesy of the Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

We've gone in a circle and now we're back to the note that was mentioned at the beginning of the article (Figure 15). In addition to David Davis' JRJ article, this note made a second JRJ appearance in Volume 20 / Issue 3. This time, Dr. Henry Hilgard wrote the article and Stu Levine owned the note. Mr. Levine brought the note to a 2009 Baltimore show and asked for attribution help. In the article, Dr. Hilgard talked about how he and David Kahn attributed the coin image on the note. Of course, they also concluded that it was an 1832 O-103 Capped Bust half dollar reverse. Unfortunately, they were unaware that David Davis previously attributed the coin image twenty years earlier!

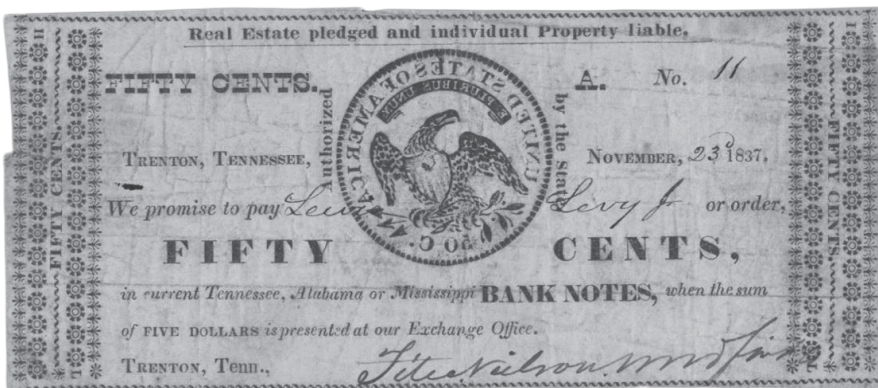


Figure 9
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

This note was issued to Lewis Levy, Jr., who was a physician in Trenton, TN. There is a small letter in each corner of the note that spells H-I-L-L. After much research, I discovered that this note was produced by printer J.D Hill at the Western Union newspaper office, in Trenton, TN. At this time, the issuer of the note is unknown.

During my research, I've documented 3 additional examples of attributable Bust coin images on obsolete paper money. Since Dr. Hilgard asked David Kahn to confirm his attribution, I also asked Mr. Kahn to confirm my attributions of these 3 coin images.

The first note is shown in Figure 16. It's a 50 cent note from the Union Bank at Jackson, TN and is dated January 30, 1838. Like the Trenton, TN note, it was also produced by J.D. Hill and issued to Lewis Levy, Jr. Because it was produced by Hill, it's not surprising that the Bust coin image on this note is also an 1832 O-103 Capped Bust half dollar reverse.



Figure 16
Image Courtesy of the Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

The second note is shown in Figure 17. It's a 12½ cent note from Armstrong, Rogers & Co. in Rogersville, TN, and is dated September 25, 1816. This note was printed by P. Carey at the Knoxville Intelligencer newspaper office in Knoxville, TN, and is a third example of how scrip notes were sometimes printed in a newspaper office.

The coin image on this note is a Capped Bust dime reverse. Here is a second example where the denomination of the note is not the same as the face value of the coin pictured on the note. Since the note is dated 1816, only 1809, 1811, or 1814 Capped Bust dimes

could be pictured on the note. This narrowed the possibilities down to 5 reverse dies. The 1814 JR-1 reverse was eliminated because the scroll doesn't begin under the D like it does on the image. The 1814 JR-2 reverse was eliminated because the 1 in the denomination is not centered under the second talon like it is on the image. The 1814 JR-3/JR-4 reverse was eliminated because there is not a period after 10 C like there is on the image. Finally, the 1814 JR-5 reverse was eliminated because STATES OF AMERICA is not 3 separate words, like it is on the image. Therefore, the image on this note is... an 1809 JR-1 or 1811 JR-1 Capped Bust dime reverse. These two die marriages share a reverse die. Because of the quality of the image, I could not determine the die state, and therefore could not determine if it was the 1809 or 1811 reverse.

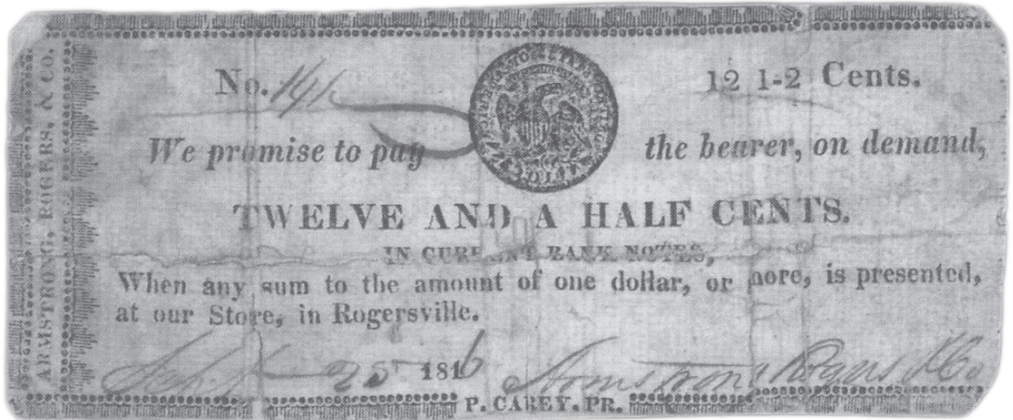


Figure 17
Image Courtesy of the Lawrence R. Stack Auction Catalog

The third note is shown in Figure 18. It's a 50 cent note from Isaac McCulloch's store in Fort Hawkins, GA, and is dated December 16, 1816. The coin image on this note is a Draped Bust half dollar reverse, and it was quite challenging to attribute. I attributed the image by using several diagnostics. They were: Star 12 points to the B in PLURIBUS; Star 13 points to the U in UNUM; Stars 6, 11 and 13 are in a fairly straight line. I also used the relationship between the I in AMERICA and the leaf, and the relationship between the letters in STATES and the clouds. Based on these diagnostics, I concluded that the image on this note is... an 1806 O-122 Draped Bust half dollar reverse (Rev. R). This is exciting because 1806 O-122 was rated R-6+ in the last JRCS Pre-Turban half dollar census!

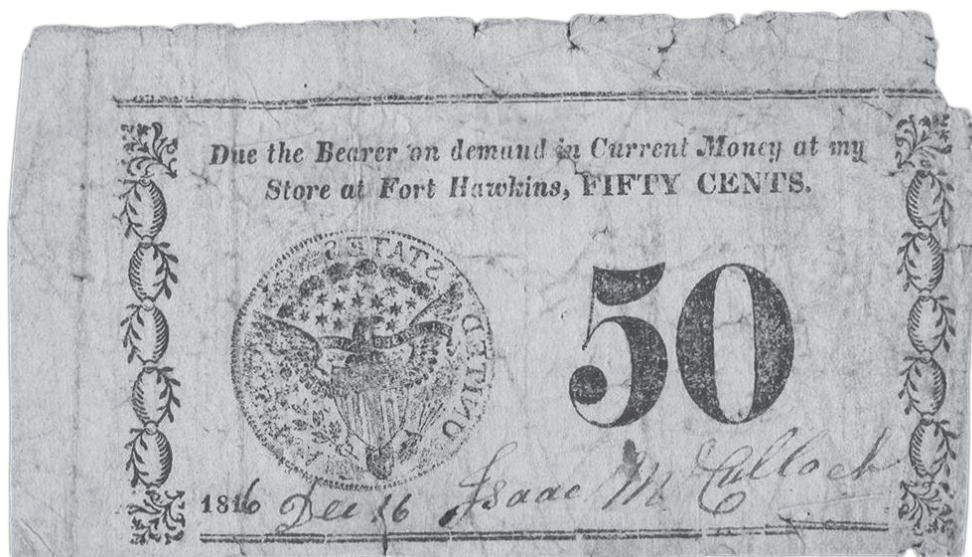


Figure 18
Image Courtesy of Heritage Auctions

In conclusion, despite David Davis' discoveries and this recent research, there is still more investigation to be done on the topic of Bust coin images on obsolete paper money. I will continue to document additional examples and do further research on the history behind these fascinating notes. They are certainly a good collecting area for JRCS members because they present all denominations of Bust coinage in an intriguing new way.

Sources:

- ❖ *Whitman Encyclopedia of Obsolete Paper Money Volume 1*, Q. David Bowers, Copyright 2014, Whitman Publishing, LLC
- ❖ *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, Russell J. Logan and John W. McCloskey, Copyright 1998, John Reich Collectors Society
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- ❖ <http://tn-roots.com>
- ❖ <http://fultonhistory.com>



Plimpton Redux

By Jeffrey Friedman

Keith Davignon authored "A Tale of Two Coin Hoards; or, Sotheby's, Pogue, and the Paper Lion" in the April 2016 issue of the John Reich Journal. Therein he cited that there were 38 coins in each of the two hoards and that they were apparently from the Plimpton family and these coins had been intact for about 150 years. I attended the public sale of The Leon Goodman Collection by Herbert I. Melnick, Inc. of Rockville Centre, New York on July 30, 1982. An excerpt from page 67 of that catalog included the following section, wherein it identified 38 uncirculated bust half dollars as having belonged to the Plimpton family, which were now up for sale.

AN EXCITING HOARD OF UNCIRCULATED HALF DOLLARS

Intermingled amongst the next group of lots is an exciting 38 piece group which was the nucleus of a hoard which has spent the past century and half together in an estate in New England.

The coins currently in the possession of the Plimpton family originally came from their great-grandfather Judge William Barron Chapin Pearsons. He was the first mayor of Holyoake, Massachusetts and was elected in 1863. Judge Pearsons was born on December 19, 1824 in Bradford, Vermont, and is a descendant of John Pearsons who emigrated from Yorkshire in 1643 to the vicinity of Boston. On February 27, 1857 the Judge married Sarah Elizabeth Taylor, the daughter of George Taylor of Westfield, Massachusetts. It is speculated that the coins could have come from George Taylor who left the Plimpton family a silver jug and two silver-plated cups which he won at an agricultural fair or from the Pearsons family. The father of Judge Pearsons was John Pearsons (1792-1857 - Hartford, Vermont) and he could have given Judge Pearsons the coins directly.

A WORD ABOUT THE GRADING

This hoard and its "togetherness" is evident both from the closely matched toning on all the specimens and from the extended runs of particular die varieties - the groups were apparently picked up directly from the bank, probably in the year of issue and seem to have been kept rolled ever since. **ALL SHOW SLIGHT DARKENING ON SOME AREAS FROM PRESSURE FROM WITHIN THE ROLL, NONE SERIOUS.** It is not to be construed as circulation.

HIM, Inc. is pleased to offer these half dollars along with the rest of this exciting group.

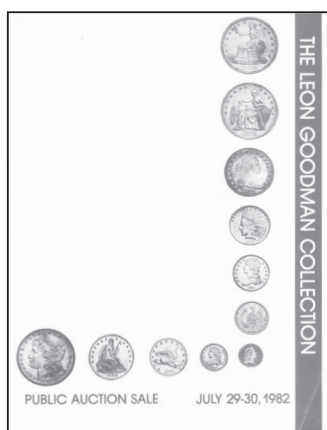
Figure 1

This is clearly a third portion of the hoard from the Plimpton family. Since there were multiple other uncirculated bust half dollars in this sale, it cannot be determined with absolute certainty which coins were from the Plimpton hoard, but comparing the contents of this sale to what Keith wrote in his article and the fact that the above description appeared before the presentation of 1821 bust half dollars in the catalog, it appears 1821 was the earliest dated coin in this group. My best guess, based upon apparent toning in the catalogue, is that the following coins were almost certainly in this group of 38:

1821 {2}	O-101 and O-105
1822 {4}	O-106 (2) and 113 (2, note one was misattributed as O-111)
1823 {14}	O-103, O-105 (8), O-106 (3), 108, 112 (2)
1824 {9}	O-101 (8), 104.

Multiple of these die marriages were represented in the other hoard coins, so this seems compatible with my thinking. There were more uncirculated coins dated between 1825 and 1836 in the catalogue but since none of the other “hoard” coins were dated after 1824 sorting out which were Plimpton coins is problematic, although an 1834 O-116 sure looked similar to the other Plimpton coins in its toning.

Well, I guess is unclear whether someone will ever determine if and/or how, the last Plimpton sibling disposed of another 38 uncirculated bust half dollars. I hope someone else can add further information.



Cover of Herbert I. Melnick auction
July 29-30, 1982 featuring
the Plimpton coins



Page 59 of the Melnick sale illustrating the hub
changes in the Capped Bust half dollar series.
How many collectors realized this valuable
information was contained in the catalog?



New Specimen Discovered of the Rare 1796 JR-7 Dime

By David W. Lange

Being able to work with coins all or most of the day has both its good and bad moments. As NGC's variety attributor, I'm able to examine a wide variety of United States coins from pre-federal issues all the way to modern commemoratives and bullion coins. The numismatist in me prefers the early federal coinage over all others, but this tends to comprise a minority of the variety submissions. We do get a fair mix of early pieces from half cents through eagles, though the greater part of these are Bust half dollars and dollars, followed by large cents, quarter dollars and half cents, in that order. Pre-1834 gold coins are a rare treat, as they exist in smaller numbers and are much less often submitted for variety attribution. To a lesser extent, the same may be said of half dimes and dimes.

A recent submission of seven coins, all of them slated for NGC's VarietyPlus™ Service, included two early half dimes and just one dime. None of these pieces presented much of a challenge to me, with the sole exception of the dime. This was an attractive specimen whose major details were clearly evident, so I wasn't expecting it to be any harder to attribute than the others. The reverse was quickly identified as Reverse D, used for three known die marriages of that date: JR-4 (R4), JR-5 (R5) and the unique example of JR-7 (R8), a marriage not known at the time the JRCS dime book was published. Its obverse, however, did not match those of either JR-4 or JR-5, as the first star was nearly touching the lowest curl. This presented me with two possibilities: It was the second known specimen of JR-7 or an entirely unknown marriage. Either scenario represented a home run for the submitter.

The only example of JR-7 known until now was the plate coin in the recently published book *Bust Dime Variety Identification Guide* by Winston Zack, Louis Scuderi and Michael Sherrill. It was identified as new marriage in 2002 by Brian Greer. That coin, however, is extremely worn and also damaged on its obverse. The only obverse feature still discernible is the date, and by comparing the positioning of these numerals against those of the submitter's coin, I was finally able to determine that it must be a new specimen of JR-7.

When attributing extreme rarities it's always advisable to get a second opinion before making any announcements, so I sent high resolution photos of the subject coin to Brad Karoleff. At his request, I agreed to let him share the photos with Ed Price and Mike Sherrill. With their concurrence that it was indeed JR-7, it was possible to alert the hobby community to this important discovery.

This newly discovered dime rarity was certified by NGC's graders as Very Good-8. Both sides are evenly worn and have attractive, original surfaces of medium gray with a touch of golden toning. This makes it far and away the finer of just two examples known for the rare JR-7 die marriage. For the first time the stars of this obverse die are plainly seen, and this reveals that Star 6 was clearly repunched counter-clockwise to its first impression. Other distinctive features include the closeness of Star 8 to the L of LIBERTY and the extreme closeness of letters ER and TY, both of these pairs touching.

The submission was made by Ron Drzewucki, Sr. of R & D Enterprises in Florissant, Missouri. Contacted by telephone with the good news, Ron was delighted to learn that his coin was so significant, telling NGC that it was part of an old collection that has been off the market for upwards of 60 years. This explains why dime specialists had not yet identified this second specimen. Mr. Drzewucki has not revealed any plans for his prize.

Editor Notes:

This article was originally supposed to appear in Volume 26/Issue 1 of the JRCS, but it was not attached to David's original email. The official press release from NGC instead appeared in the last issue.



A New Draped Bust Half Dime Die Variety

By Jim Carr

I have discovered what I consider to be an example of an unreported die marriage for the year 1800 in the draped bust half-dime series. This coin is a combination of two previously known dies. The obverse is Logan and McCloskey Obverse 3, frequently referred to as the Libekty variety. The reverse is Heraldic Eagle Reverse C, which is currently reported for years 1801, 1802 and part of 1803. When discussing obverse numbers and reverse letters I am referencing “Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837” by Russell J. Logan and John W. McCloskey. Photos by Tom Mulvaney.

I purchased this coin off eBay in the spring of 2004. There was enough of the reverse present that I had little trouble attributing it as Reverse C. I could also make out the rounded top of the last digit in the date. Only 1800 and 1802 have rounded tops to the final digit in the date, and reverse C is not reported for the year 1800. I thought I had found an 1802. I quickly purchased the piece, and waited for it to arrive.

When I received the coin I quickly noted that my reverse attribution was correct. Upon examining the obverse it became clear that this coin did not match the diagnostics of an 1802. The position of stars 12 and 13 are quite distant on the 1802, but on this example the stars are quite close. I was somewhat perplexed, but continued to study the coin. After some examination it became clear to me that the obverse was an 1800 Obverse 3.

I presented the coin at the ANA’s 2005 National Money Show in Kansas City. My display received first place in the science category as well as earning me the National Coin Week award. The John Reich Collectors Society had a meeting at this show, and I brought the piece by for examination.

Shortly after the ANA show my university presented me with the opportunity to study abroad. I jumped at the opportunity, but had to make a tough decision about how to finance that learning opportunity. I elected to sell the majority of my collection and use those funds to further my education. Without a collection I quickly dropped out of numismatics. It would be nearly a decade before I thought about my curious half dime again.

The coin in question is in poor shape. There is an oblong hole located at the top of Liberty’s head. This damage, though unfortunate, is almost entirely responsible for preserving enough of this coin for it to be identifiable.



Figure 1
obverse and reverse

The draped bust heraldic eagle type runs from 1800 - 1805. Only the 1800 and the 1802 have rounded tops to the last digit. The 3 from the 1803 is flat topped. The 2 from the 1802 connects with the lower part of the bust while on this coin the digit is distant. This is an 1800 half dime.

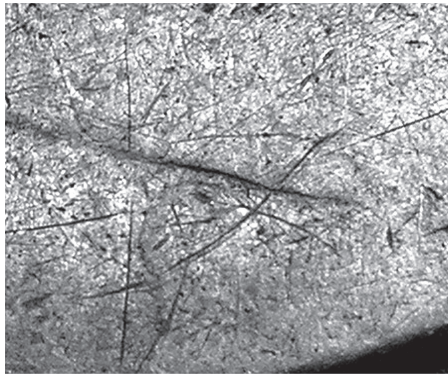


Figure 2
last digit in date obv

There are 3 known obverses for the 1800 half dime. Obverse 3 has star 13 rotated counterclockwise in relation to star 12. Obverse 1 and 2 have the inner star tips in alignment. This is an 1800 obverse 3.

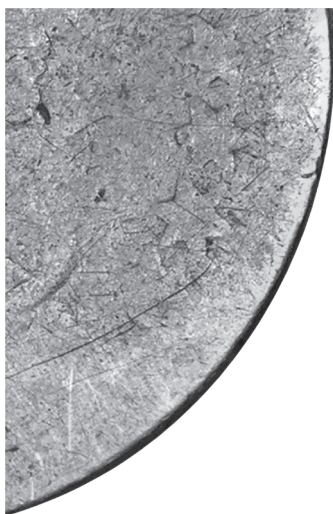


Figure 3
obv stars

There are 2 reported reverses for 1800 half dimes, and an additional 2 reported in years 1801-1805 . Both reverse A and B are reported exclusively for the year 1800. Reverse C is reported in 1801, 1802 and 1803. Reverse D is reported in 1803 and 1805.

In this image you can see the letter “S” in STATES located to the right of the cloud. Reverse A has the S centered above the cloud. Reverse B has the “S” slightly right of center. Reverse C and D have the “S” located to the right of the cloud. This is either reverse C or D.

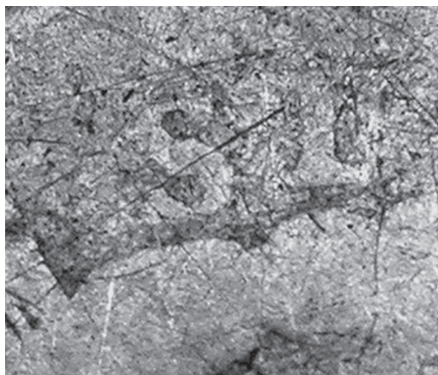


Figure 4
s-states rev

The star below the “F” in OF is distant from the cloud. The only known heraldic eagle reverse with the star distant from the cloud is reverse C. This is reverse C. This leads me to believe this is an unreported die pairing.



Figure 5
star below of rev

I would like to thank my father, Steve Carr, for providing me with the knowledge necessary to identifying this die variety. His expertise in the field of numismatics is the sole reason I gave this coin a second look. Thanks Dad.



Bust Half Dimes – When is a Cud Not a Cud?

By Jeffrey Friedman

This is the first of what are planned as a series of John Reich Journal articles on bust half dimes with cuds. The purpose of this first article is to begin a process of developing a better mutual understanding of commonly used terminology and thus improve the quality of future data collection about these coins. I am writing after having conversations with several bust half dime collectors where we were using the same language (i.e. “full cud,” “cud,” “rim break,” “retained cud,” “partial cud,” “incomplete cud” and/or “internal cud”) but it became clear to me that these terms did not mean the same thing to everyone. I expect some of the differences in the meanings of these terms stemmed from our reference standard, *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, written by Russell Logan and John McCloskey and published in 1998.

Authors Logan and McCloskey referred to what I will call two generic types of cuds, those including the rim and another category that did not. The latter are commonly called “internal cuds.” When one searches the older numismatic literature, particularly in the error collecting field, the standard definition of a “cud” required the coin’s rim to be included. There is an early section of *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* (page 41) entitled “Partial and Full Die Cuds” which defined these two terms. The only two uses of the term “partial cud” that I found in this book, the only current standard reference book on bust half dimes, appear in this section, once in the heading and once in the text. For clarity I am reproducing this complete section below (in italics).

“Partial and Full Die Cuds

As die cracks expand around the of a periphery die, they extended deeper and deeper into the die’s surface. When this happens, a crevice is formed in the working die permitting a fissure of silver to form on the coin during the strike. This raised fissure of metal is frequently the highest surface and the first location to wear.

If the working die was not immediately retired, the die crack may have continued to expand until a portion of the die became loose. When this happened, the loose piece was forced below the surface of the die by the action of the screw press, thus becoming a raised portion on the coin. This is known as a partial cud and is weakly struck. A full cud occurs on a coin after the loose die piece breaks away and allows the flan to expand without restriction.”

The term “partial cud” was never used again in the book and thus was never used to describe any specific die marriage or remarriage. However, the usual definition employed by error collectors since the 1960s, which is basically the same as presented in the introductory section of *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, was not used consistently in this book to describe individual die marriages and remarriages where the term “cud” was used. In particular, multiple marriages and/or remarriages where the rim was not included were

described as “cuds” in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*. An often-used term in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* was “retained cud,” which most people use synonymously with partial cud as defined therein. Sixteen separate die marriages were described as having or developing “retained cuds” in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, either in the descriptions within the Remarriage Charts (pages 65-77) or in the descriptions of a calendar year (e.g., 1832) or the descriptions of the individual marriages/remarriages.

Additionally, another introductory section was called **“Die Chips or Filled Letters.”** The last sentence in this section is as follows: *“These die chips are always conspicuous and help to identify the die state, and they are independent of adjacent die cracks or cuds.”*

The definition from *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* on page 41 for a “partial cud” and a “full cud” is virtually identical to that in *The Design Cud* by Goodman, published in 1969 and in an updated version published in 1979. I consider these probably the best reference on the topic of cuds. Thus, if one strictly used the formal definition of a cud, both partial or retained and full in the early section of *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, it would require the rim to be involved to use the term cud. Therefore, the answer to the question in the title of this article “When is a Cud not a Cud?” would be when it does not involve the rim.

However, unfortunately, this approach was not used in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* to describe all the individual die marriages and remarriages. Since that book is unlikely to be revised, for continuity I think we need to retain the use the term “cud” within the bust half dime community to describe a circumscribed raised area on the surface of a bust half dime that does not include the rim.

My favorite examples of internal cuds are the 1835 LM-3 marriage and 1834 LM-4.3 remarriage. However, these two types of internal cud are quite different. The 1835 LM-3 has a lump develop between the C and A of AMERICA on the reverse which also includes part of the C; it can be seen in the Logan-McCloskey plate coin where it is simply called a “cud,” and in Figure 1. The 1835 LM-3 late die stage has a lump that appears to reach the height of the rim, if not higher between the C and the A of AMERICA. It appears that a small piece of the die was actually missing to cause this raised area on the coin. The internal cud that occurs on the 1833 LM-4.3 is between the scroll and the F in OF and the first A in AMERICA, in this case it is called a “retained cud” in the bust half dime reference. The entire field between the die cracks of the LM-4.3 is raised, but it does not include the rim and does not attain the height of the rim or rise above it or above the elevated adjacent area of the scroll, which can be seen in the Logan-McCloskey plate coin and in Figure 2.



Figure 1
1835 LM-3 H10C with Internal Cud



Figure 2
1833 LM-4.3 H10C with Internal Cud

To reiterate, the term “partial cud” defined early in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* was not used by the authors in *any* of their die state descriptions for any half dime die marriage or remarriage! Instead, they used “retained cud” quite often when describing die states of various half dime die marriages and remarriages. So we have two types of retained cuds, one with an apparent missing piece of the die and a second type with what appears to be a loose, but retained, piece of the die present during coining.

As noted above, there are inconsistencies in the use of the term “cud” and its various types in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*. I believe these inconsistencies in the use of the term cud in our standard reference have led to some of what I will call a “lack of mutual understanding” when using the term “cud” and/or “partial cud” and/or “retained cud” and/or “internal cud” in the bust half dime community. Even if one chose to take the position that die chips not within letters, as occurs on the 1835 LM-3 marriage where a die lump appears between the C and A of AMERICA (see Figure 1 above), this die injury does not involve the rim of the coin and as such does not meet the definition of a cud in *Federal half Dimes 1792-1837* or the error literature.

With this as a background and after discussions with several bust half dime collectors, I would suggest the following definitions so all can have the same understanding when looking at and/or describing a late die stage bust half dime:

Full cud: An abnormally raised area of metal on the field and/or design involving the edge of the die, with no detectable detail present (i.e., letters, stars, etc.) caused by a missing piece from a broken die. The entire area of the cud need not be raised to the height of the rim or above it if the cud is large enough, but the entire area must be above the height of the entire adjacent field of the coin, although it may only reach the height of the rim where it abuts the rim.

Retained cud: An abnormally raised area of metal within an area contained between die cracks and/or other design elements (e.g., letters and/or scroll) and/or the rim AND this area must be raised above all adjacent field areas, but not necessarily up to or above the height of the rim and/or reach the height of the scroll. On coins of high enough grade, there will be detectable detail present within the area of the retained cud.

Internal cud: An abnormally raised area of metal within an area contained between die cracks and/or design elements but not the rim, where this area is raised above all adjacent field areas, but not necessarily above elevated design elements (i.e., scroll and/or letters).

Incomplete cud: An abnormally raised area of metal within an area contained between die cracks and/or other design elements and/or the rim but only a portion of the contained area is raised above the adjacent field areas and/or the rim.

Using these definitions, one also would classify internal cuds as retained cuds. Note that a coin with an area which is between die cracks and/or design elements and/or the rim without the entire contained area being raised above the adjacent field area is NOT considered a full, partial or retained cud but is an incomplete cud using these definitions. Partial or retained cuds will show some design elements being present, however, if a coin is well worn, no design elements may be discernable. I would suggest use of the term retained cud rather than partial cud for multiple reasons. Firstly, the text in *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837* used only the term “retained cud” to describe individual die marriages and remarriages and never the term “partial cud” to describe any individual die marriage or remarriage, and secondly, the word partial suggests something is missing. In the older literature what was missing seemed to be that the piece of the die near the rim was still “retained” rather than having fallen out. The use of “incomplete” cud to me does suggest something is missing, namely, that the entire area of the coin’s surface is not raised above all adjacent areas.

From my perspective, cuds that touch the rim at 2 places must have both junctions between the rim and the die breaks hit the rim above the height of the adjacent fields outside of the die crack(s) as well as having the entire area enclosed by the die cracks elevated above the adjacent field of the coin’s surface. If this definition is not met, I consider such coins as “incomplete cuds.” Pictures of two 1829 marriages shown below can be instructive on this point. Figure 3 shows two “cuds,” the one on the left

(1829 LM-3) has the entire field enclosed between the die cracks including at both points where it hits the rim raised above the adjacent field and rim areas and within this raised area the dentil details are very clear. The second coin (on the right below) has most of the enclosed area (rim to E and R) raised above the field and rim, but not the area where the die crack goes into a dentil from the R in AMERICA nor from the dentil to the rim, as such this coin would be an incomplete cud using the above definitions.



Figure 3
1829 LM-3 H10C with Retained Cud (Top) and
1829 LM-7.3 with Incomplete Cud (Bottom)

When I reported my census data for cuds last year, I only included coins with either full or retained cuds, choosing not to report coins that met my definition of an incomplete cud, including the 1829 LM-7.3 pictured above. I know other reporters did things differently, another reason I have submitted this article. In my experience, the 1829 LM-7.3 remarriage is most commonly found with an incomplete cud, as shown in the figure above, while a coin with a true retained cud is less common. I have not seen and am not aware of a full cud for the 1829 LM-7.3 remarriage.

Figure 4 below shows a full cud for the 1829 LM-3 marriage. Please note that there is no detail present in any of the area contained within the full cud and this whole area within the die cracks is raised well above the IT of UNITED, the adjacent field areas as well as the adjacent rim areas. The contrast between the two 1829 LM-3 pieces in Figures 3 and 4 clearly demonstrates the major differences between a full cud and a retained cud.



Figure 4
1829 LM-3 H10C with Full Cud

I would like to see the next bust half dime census collect data on the different die stages of the known cuds, since I believe certain marriages/remarriages have the full cud being rarer, while for others the retained cud is rarer. I plan future articles to stimulate further research and discussion in this area, in particular trying to document which die marriages and/or remarriages exist with full cuds and the rarity of the various die stages of marriages/remarriages that eventually develop cuds.

The author would greatly appreciate communications regarding these or other marriages or remarriages with full cuds or any other proposed cud beyond what has been published as well as the above proposed cud definitions. The author can be reached at friedmanbythesea@gmail.com. The author would also like to thank Richard Meaney for his assistance with the preparation of this article, especially for help with the provision of photographs of several coins.

References:

- (1) Logan, Russell and McCloskey, John, *Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837*, 1998
- (2) Goodman, Mort, *The Design Cud*, 1969
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Capped Bust Halves: Mints Garnished with Parsley?

By Randall Carman, Sr.¹

Introduction

In his fascinating opus regarding half dollar Overton varieties, Parsley (2005) maintains that some dates were better struck than others. Specifically, he directly states, or intimates, that the 1807-1811 and 1830-1831 Capped Bust halves are generally “weakly-struck,” whereas the 1812-1814 and 1817-1819 halves are “well-struck.” These differences in quality of strike have implications for such things as die life and die defects or cracks.

For example, both Bucki (2015) and Parsley (2005) note that coins from the early nineteenth century (e.g., bust halves) were often struck until the dies wore out, suggesting lesser quality planchet strikes over die life. Moreover, the notion of die pressure and quality of strike can also be illustrated in a recent *Coin World* advertisement (December, 2015), whereby striking pressure is billed as the telltale feature in full, split-tail strikes. Similarly, regarding the life of coinage dies for Barber coins, Bowers (2015) notes that it would be interesting to see if die life is associated with strike sharpness. And, finally, Margolis & Weinberg (2004) indicate that weakly struck coins can result from lower pressure strikes. Consequently, if Parsley (2005) is correct in his assessment of strike quality, while extrapolating from the aforementioned principles of die overuseage and variable pressure gradients of strike, one might theorize that we would expect to see more Capped Bust halves struck from the dies of the “weakly-struck” years (Hypothesis 1) and more cracked dies in the “well-struck” years (Hypothesis 2).

Additionally, I wanted to see if there was an association or correlation between die utilization amount and mintage amount for the Capped Bust years of 1807-1836, inclusive. I compiled and paired the values for each year and found these variables to be statistically significant ($r = .77$, $p < .00001$, sig.),² This indicates that the variables of die amount and mintage amount account for 59% of the variation (i.e., coefficient of determination) that is seen across these years.³ In other words, generally speaking, if you minted a lot of halves back then you needed a lot of dies or, alternatively, if you made a lot of dies you could mint a lot of halves. Not surprisingly, the correlation between die marriage amount and mintage amount for these same years was also calculated to be statistically significant ($r = .68$, $p < .00005$, sig.), with roughly 46% of the variation explained. Keep in mind if there was no correlation ($r = 0$) and 0% of the variation was accounted for, this could mean the dies and/or striking process would have been highly unreliable (e.g., imagine a newly affixed die shattering into uselessness upon the striking of a few halves and another die successfully withstanding thousands of strikes.). Of course, some of the unaccounted for variation that is present in these findings, 41% and 54% respectively, was possibly due to such things as die

(manufacturing) differences, human factors, striking differences, planchet variation, needed mintage - the dies were still good and later reused, but no more coins were needed that year, etc.

Hypotheses

HYPOTHESIS 1: More halves are predicted to be struck from the “weakly-struck” year dies of 1807-1811/1830-1831 than the “well-struck” year dies of 1812-1814/1817-1819.

HYPOTHESIS 2: More cracked dies are predicted from the “well-struck” years of 1812-1814/1817-1819 than from the “weakly-struck” period of 1807-1811/1830-1831.

In testing these hypotheses, averages or relative counts will serve as the unit of analysis due to mintage differences among the dates, although frequencies will also be examined.

Method

HYPOTHESIS 1 was examined by comparing the mean or average number of “weakly-struck” halves for each year to the “well-struck” halves in accordance with Parsley’s (2005) designation of strike quality. This was based on mintage and die utilization for each year among the categorical variables (e.g., For 1807: 750,000 halves/7 dies = 107,214 average halves per die.). HYPOTHESIS 2 was tested by tallying, via content analysis of Parsley’s (2005) work, the number of “cracked” and “uncracked” die citations he mentions (i.e., Overton types) across the “well-struck” and “weakly-struck” years.

Results

For HYPOTHESIS 1, the mean or average number of coins per die for the “weakly-struck” halves across the 145 total dies was 114,781 halves per die, which was greater than the “well-struck” mean across 118 dies at 78,558 halves per die. Although there is a 36,000 coin disparity between dies (i.e., $114,781 - 78,558 = 36,223$), the difference was not quite statistically significant ($t = 1.19$, $p < .14$, ns.; one-tailed probability, unequal variances).⁴ Thus, although the hypothesis was not supported in terms of statistical significance ($.14 > .05$), it certainly trended in the hypothesized direction.

A variance ratio test was conducted, due to unequal variances, and it revealed the variance in the “weakly-struck” group (3.5 billion) was significantly higher ($F = 16.61$, $p < .01$, sig.) compared to the “well-struck” group (211 million).⁵ As can be seen from the “F” value, the difference was over 16 times greater. The largest disparity in the “weakly-struck” group, exceeding 162,000 halves per die, was between 1811 and 1831. One possible explanation is that in 1831 nearly 6 million halves needed to be produced, so the dies were possibly pushed beyond their typical limit, which again

suggests weaker strikes due to wear. Alternatively, the largest disparity in the “well-struck” group was just shy of 35,000 halves per die (1812 vs. 1817).

HYPOTHESIS 2 was supported and was correspondingly statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 2.91$, $p < .05$, sig.; one-tailed)⁶, with 53% of the “well-struck” die years exhibiting cracks versus 42% of the “weakly-struck” die years (see Table 1).

Table 1: Chi-square (χ^2) Weak vs. Well Cracked Die Comparison

MINTAGE	YEARS	STRIKE	CRACKED DIE	UNCRAKED DIE
16,643,290	1807-1811/1830-1831	Weak	61 (42%)	84 (58%)
9,292,926	1812-1814/1817-1819	Well	63 (53%)	55 (47%)

A subdivided, goodness-of-fit chi-square analysis was performed separately for “cracked” and “uncracked” dies using total mintages as the basis for calculating frequencies (see Table 2). The results for the “cracked” dies was significant ($\chi^2 = 12.09$, $p < .0005$, sig.), indicating there were disproportionally more “cracked” dies in the “well-struck” years (63 vs. 44.4). However, the results for the “uncracked” dies was not significant ($\chi^2 = 0.85$, $p < .36$, ns.), suggesting “uncracked” dies occurred at expected amounts for the “weak” and “well-struck” years.

Table 2: Chi-square (χ^2) Observed and Expected Die Comparison

STRIKE	Cracked Die Observed	Cracked Die Expected	Uncracked Die Observed	Uncracked Die Expected
WEAK	61	79.6	84	89.2
WELL	63	44.4	55	49.8

On the balance, the findings seemingly support Parsley’s (2005) work in that it appears that what he identifies as “well-struck” halves is indeed associated with an increased likelihood of die cracks and trends toward shortened die life, or vice-versa for “weakly-struck” identifications. Interestingly, the notion of shortened die life and sharpness of strike is what Bowers (2015) requests regarding Barber half-dollar coins. Consequently, for this study of Capped Bust halves the coefficient of determination from the HYPOTHESIS 1 “ t ” value result of 1.19 converts to 11.4% of variance explained.³ In other words, sharpness of strike, as discerned by Parsley (2005), accounts for or is attributable to over 11% of the variation in die life.

Conclusions

It is interesting to speculate on what accounts for the “well-struck” years of 1812-1814/1817-1819, but certainly tempting to conclude that these years, on the heels of

the War of 1812, perhaps embody mint employees' patriotic pride in America reflected through well-crafted coinage. However, whether such an interpretation is merely far-fetched romanticism, coincidence or artifactual in nature remains open. Perhaps other collectors, researchers, archivists, etc. may be able to shed light on what may account for the "well-struck" disparity. It should also be noted that the methodology used by Parsley (2005) to discern the quality of these years is unknown to the author.

In terms of the Capped Bust enthusiast, Parsley's (2005) designation of "well-struck" halves may be useful for a budget-minded type collector. If a collector wanted to acquire one of the "well" specimens, there were just over 9.2 million minted. However, acquiring an "uncracked" example reduces the pool to an estimated 4.3 million (i.e., $9,292,926 \times .47 = 4,367,675$)⁷, with the prospects even more daunting when considering uncracked marriages and survivorship (see Table 1, well-uncracked). Still, according to *Coin World* (May, 2016), an 1819 half in AU-50 retails for \$500, which is the least expensive of the "well" years in this grade.

There are many caveats and limitations regarding this study that are perhaps too numerous to mention, including the rather small data set that addressed only 31% of the total mintage and 45% of the yearly mints. Yes, only the larger diameter capped beauties from 1807-1836, which are my favorite, were examined. Perhaps future research can address expanded mintages and further examine or refine models and methods of assessing strike sharpness and die life/utilization for this series.

Study Contributions

The study, albeit far from perfect, appears to represent an independent confirmation of Parsley's (2005) assertion of strike quality that was approached from the principles of pressure, mintage, and breaks. The correlation between the number of dies and mintage amount seems rather intuitive, but quantifying that value retrospectively from 200 years ago seems rather interesting to me. Although die cracks do occur in "weakly-struck" years, they appear disproportionately in "well-struck" years and beyond chance expectation. This finding raised the question of whether pride following the events of 1812 may have inspired the mint to strike more distinctive halves. Finally, Bowers' (2015) curiosity over die life and strike sharpness for the Barber series was applied and addressed for these Capped Busts and was quantified at over 11%. From the author's perspective, this seems more than a trivial amount, considering the mint was engaged in producing a practical item of commerce.

Footnotes

Footnote 1: The author would like to acknowledge and thank Bradley Karoleff for his helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this manuscript.

Footnote 2: Correlation or “*r*” values range from -1.00 to 1.00. A correlation that approaches 1 means that high levels of a variable are associated/correlated with high levels of another variable. A correlation that approaches -1 means that high levels of a variable are associated with low levels of another variable. A correlation of 0 indicates no relationship between the variables. Also, the presence of a correlation does not imply causation. Statistical significance or “*p*” values are typically defined as a probability of less than or equal to .05, an acceptable scientific value. In other words, at $p < .05$ the discrepancy would only be likely to occur by random or chance variation less than 5% of the time, suggesting high confidence in the result.

Footnote 3: The coefficient of determination or terms such as “variance explained” or “variance accounted for” ranges from 0-100%. This refers to how variation in one variable relates or accounts for a percentage of variation in another variable. The greater the percentage, the greater the relationship.

Footnote 4: The “*t*” value is for t-test and is a statistical test that compares two different group means or averages for significant differences. Higher calculated values may reach or exceed statistical significance at $p < .05$.

Footnote 5: The “*F*” value refers to analysis of variance and is a statistical test that compares two or more group means for significant differences. Higher calculated values may reach or exceed statistical significance at $p < .05$.

Footnote 6: Chi-square (X^2) is a statistical test that compares frequencies or observed and expected values for statistical significance between variables. For example, imagine flipping a fair coin. We would expect to get 5 “heads” and 5 “tails” in 10 flips, but if we actually got 7 “heads” and 3 “tails,” we probably would not be too surprised. However, if we actually observed 70 “heads” and 30 “tails” in 100 flips, this would raise our suspicion that perhaps there was something “going on” with the coin and/or flipper. Indeed, $X^2 = 1.60$, $p < .21$, not significant, for the 10-flip example. However, $X^2 = 16.0$, $p < .0001$, significant, for the 100-flip example. The 10-flip disparity would be expected to occur by chance about 20% of the time, whereas the 100-flip disparity would be expected to occur by chance in less than 1 in 10,000 cases. This would dramatically suggest that something other than chance is influencing the result.

Footnote 7: The amount of 4.3 million is actually a lowest-level estimate because die breaks or cracks may emerge over usage.

References

- (1) Bowers, Q.D. *A Guide Book of Barber Silver Coins*, pg. 18, Whitman Publishing, 2015.
- (2) Bucki, J. *Die Cracks-The Reason for Jagged Lines on the Surface of a Coin*, About.com, 2015.
- (3) *Coin World*, pg. 20, December 2015.
- (4) *Coin World*, pgs.78-79, May 2016.
- (5) Howell, D.C. *Fundamental Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences*, Thomson-Wadsworth, 2008.
- (6) Margolis, A. & Weinberg, F. *The Error Coin Encyclopedia*, 2004.
- (7) Parsley, D. L. *United States Early Half Dollar Die Varieties 1794-1836*, 2005.
- (8) Zar, J. H. *Biostatistical Analysis*, Prentice-Hall, 1984.



Figure 1
1809 Capped Bust half dollar
weakly struck left wing



Figure 2
1817 Capped Bust half dollar
strongly struck left wing

Both images courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas, Texas.



1814/3 Half Dollar with Interesting Counterstamp

By David Rubin

A recent purchase reminded me of an article that I wrote for the *John Reich Journal* several years ago titled “Hardin’s Law Modified – *You Can Never Learn Only One Thing* (Volume 9, Issue 2 – January 1995). Hardin’s Law, an ecological principle, states that you can never change only one thing---because the components of an ecosystem are connected, a change in one component results in changes in other components. In the article, I reflected on the idea that you can never learn only one thing; there is interrelatedness in learning, and study of one subject usually provides ties to other subjects. The impetus for the article was the Rappite (Harmonist) hoard of bust half dollars, found at Economy, Pennsylvania, and how study of the preceding Rappite and Owenite communes at New Harmony, Indiana led one into natural history, art, history, exploration, education, sociology, and many other fields.

The recent purchase was a very fine (ANACS VF 30 Details) 1814/3 capped bust half dollar – O-101a. The coin is absolutely original, toned, and no problem except for the counterstamp in the left obverse field and the corresponding distortion on the reverse (figure 1). The counterstamp is “I. AITKEN”, in a rectangular cartouche (figure 2). Brunk (“American and Canadian Counterstamped Coins”, 1987) noted that this counterstamp was the hallmark of John Aitken, a Philadelphia silversmith who was born in 1768 and died in 1856. Brunk also indicated that the counterstamp had been found on three coins --- two half cents, dated 1826 and 1828, and a Spanish-American one real coin. The coin described in this article, therefore, is only the fourth known with this counterstamp and the first bust coin.

Explanation is needed for the fact that the hallmark of John Aitken is “I. AITKEN.” Shouldn’t it be J. AITKEN? Brunk (1987), in his introduction, explained that “‘John’ is one of the most common of English names and ‘Iohn’ was a common old spelling.” An alternative explanation may be that since Aitken was born in Scotland, his first name actually was Ian which became John sometime after arriving in America. Some quick research also reveals that the birth and death dates given by Brunk (1987) are incorrect. Aitken was not born in 1768, but rather in 1744 or 1745 in Dulkeath, Scotland. Also, Aitken did not die in 1856, but rather in 1831 and was buried in the Christ Church’s burial ground in Philadelphia.

Aitken came to America in 1771, landing in Philadelphia and becoming an indentured servant to goldsmith William Taylor. By 1780, he had his own business in Philadelphia as a silversmith. Two of his silver works, a teaspoon and a creamer, are now in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. His hallmark is illustrated in an on-line directory of silversmiths and I have also come across a forum post illustrating his mark on a pair of sugar tongs; the mark in both illustrations is virtually identical to the mark on the 1814/3 half dollar.

While Aitken was an accomplished silversmith, he is actually better known as a publisher of sheet music. He began publishing sheet music in 1787, and was the first in the United States to use the “punch” engraving or stamping process for doing so. In 1787, he published three works, including “A Selection of the Most Favorite Scots Tunes” by Alexander Reinagle and “A Compilation of the Litanies and Vespers Hymns and Anthems as They Are Sung in the Catholic Church”. The latter was the first American collection of Catholic music. Between 1787 and 1793, Aitken was the only publisher of sheet music in the U.S.; of more than 20 publications, at least 15 were works by Reinagle, a Scottish musician who lived in Philadelphia.

In 1793, music publication by Aitken largely ceased, probably due to competition. From 1793 to 1806, Aitken published only two works --- “Scots Musical Museum” (1797) and “The Goldsmith’s Rant” (1802). The Goldsmith’s Rant was actually composed by Aitken, revealing a third, although likely not very accomplished, skill. The rant was only one page long, and, on the back of the sheet, Aitken advertised his work as a goldsmith and jeweler. He resumed active music publishing in 1807 and between 1807 and 1811 published approximately 125 titles. While producing no more sheet music after 1811, he continued in the printing business until 1825.

I purchased this interesting coin on Ebay for \$164.50. Was it advertisement for his work as a smith or as a printer? Normally, an 1814/3 half dollar in no problem VF condition would bring significantly more. This one did not, undoubtedly because the counterstamp was considered “damage.” To me, such a counterstamp, and the story behind it and the learning opportunity that it provides, makes the coin more valuable than a no problem piece.



On-Line References:

- (1) Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia – “John Aitken (music publisher)”
- (2) University of Pennsylvania Library, Department of Special Collections, Keffer Collection of Sheet Music, ca. 1790-1895 – “Philadelphia Music Publishers: John Aitken (1744 or 1745 – 1831)”
- (3) www.sterlingflatwarefashions.com – “Silversmiths Directory & Sterling Marks”



Browning 6 Quarter Cud: A Second Example **By Nathan Markowitz**

I am pleased to report the discovery of a second example of a reverse cud on the Browning 6 die pairing; arguably the second most dramatic cud in the draped bust series. Late die states are indeed popular amongst collectors in our club. One wonders at times why we are so enamoured with “failures” of our early government’s efforts at minting yet such passion runs deep in our collective numismatic fabric.

Cuds on draped bust quarters are arguably rarer than those on capped bust quarters. The 1806 B 9 has a common reverse cud above T. Several tiny “rim cuds” are seen on 1806 B 2. The 1805 B 2 has a very scarce “retained” cud at stars 10-13. One can argue that the myriad of obverse cracks on the scarce 1796 B 2 represents a retained cud. The great rarity in this series, the 1806 B 8 has a dramatic reverse cud at “UN 25.” Two were found in rapid succession after the first changed hands in 2007.

Finally the 1806 B 6 cud over ST; the present find. This is a full cud like those found on 1806 B 8 and B 9. The cud was initially discovered by “Jedi master” cherry-picker Brian Greer in 8/2002 and now resides in an advanced quarter collection. The second published example was uncovered in June 2016 and is a coin with damage. Ironically there is a rim bump at the exact location of the cud forcing me to look thrice to confirm the die stage. One could speculate that an intrepid collector tried to “hammer out” the damage yet this is a far-fetched hypothesis given the usual beating our early quarters normally received in everyday commerce. Despite her modest condition, it is still a neat find and I shall paraphrase fellow collector Bill Luebke’s prior observation that “even a squirrel sometimes finds a nut”. New discoveries await...Next.



